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FM AMEMBASSY BAKU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1068
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0891
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1307

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAKU 000315

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, EUR/CARC, EUR/RPM, S/CT - AVERILL ROBERTSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/17/2019

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SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: SPOT REPORT - U/I HIGH SPEED BOATS
CLOSE TO BP PLATFORMS IN CASPIAN

Classified By: POLECON COUNSELOR ROBERT GARVERICK, REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

11. (C) At 22:50 local time on 14 April 2009, the head of the Off-Shore Production Unit Center for British Petroleum (BP) called the DATT to report that two fast boats came within one mile of their offshore platforms, tracking at speeds in excess of 45 knots. The incident allegedly took place 13 April at approximately 09:00 at the East Azeri platform (ACG Complex).

12. (C) The boats reportedly had three Yamaha outboards and had a cigarette profile, and were about six meters in length. Once source said that it was a dark boat with no crew on board, and another source said that the crew was disguised as being dressed in camouflage gear and, by virtue of the presence of nets, they may have been fishermen; the registration of the boats was not ascertained, and no photographs were taken. BP Security launched their own craft to pursue the boat, but, limited to speeds of 34 knots, they were unable to intercept it. BP simultaneously notified Azerbaijan,s Navy and Coast Guard.

13. (C) Given the camouflage dress and the high-speed nature of the watercraft, BP officials suspected that the men might be engaged in smuggling activities, but feared terrorist activity. (Note: the South Caspian is a known area of smuggling activity, with contraband, including narcotics, moving in and out of Iran and Turkmenistan. Caspian Sea delimitation is not established in the region as a whole, and Azerbaijan,s Coast Guard and Navy have limited abilities to patrol and protect offshore areas, including zones where oil and gas exploration and development take place. End Note)

14. (C) BP called the Ministry of National Security (MNS), and was subsequently told by law enforcement officials that the perpetrators were merely illegal fishermen. BP Security has also followed up with the Navy and Coast Guard, which have stepped up patrols in the region.

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